



**FIGHTING MEN**  
**NEED GOOD**  
**LEATHER**

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**



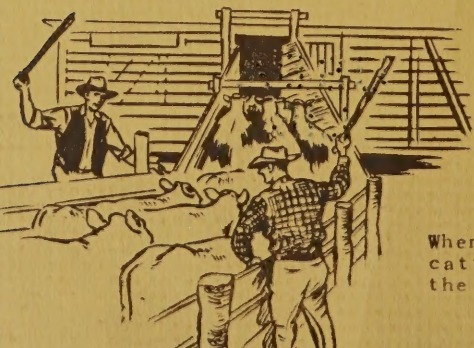
Guard against scratches and barbed wire cuts while the hide is on the animal

**L**eather is one of the most essential commodities for both military and civilian uses. It ranks right along with steel, rubber, wool, cotton, and food.

The armed forces need increasing amounts of leather for boots and shoes, jackets and helmets, gloves and mittens, harness, straps, belts, holsters, scabbards, gaskets and many other purposes. The boys in the Army use many more shoes than they do in civilian life. Farmers, ranchmen, and industrial workers likewise need them in their jobs of producing food and war materials. Nothing can take the place of leather's durability and service under hard wear and tear.

Where is this leather to come from? In addition to domestic production, we have for years imported nearly one-fourth of the hides needed to supply our peacetime needs. Today we have no stock pile of leather or hides. War demands are mounting. Imports cannot be increased, but will actually be less because of shipping shortages.

As a result, we must depend to a greater extent on domestic production. To conserve our reduced supplies it has been necessary to place ceiling prices on hides and leather, to allocate hides and skins to tanners, to restrict the sale of leather for domestic use, and to ration shoes.



When shipping cattle go easy on the prod





Cattle grubs -  
that now damage  
1/3 of all hides  
- can be con-  
trolled

We must get the utmost value and service out of every domestic hide and skin. Strong, firm, long-wearing leather cannot be made from hides and skins that have been seriously damaged by grub holes, scratches, cuts, scores, decay, or other defects.

All who produce or handle hides must do their part in keeping them in first-class condition.

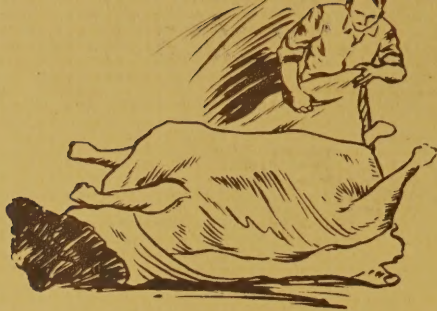
The farmer or stockman must do all he can to prevent damage by ticks, grubs, scores, barb wire, brands, and other things that may injure the hide while it is on the animal. Too often hides are considered an unimportant byproduct. It is estimated that 35 percent of all domestic hides are damaged by cattle grubs alone. This represents the loss of enough good leather to supply shoes for 9 million soldiers for an entire year.

Not only do grubs damage hides, but they are also responsible for the annual loss of approximately 11½ million pounds of beef - an amount of meat to supply a city of over 100,000 persons for an entire year. The total annual loss to the industry by this pest is estimated at over 50 million dollars.

The butcher must see that the hide is not cut or scored or taken off poorly during slaughter. Damage from careless butchering and take-off cause the loss of millions of pounds of valuable leather annually.



Skinning knives  
should have  
rounded blades  
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points



In skinning cattle avoid scoring or cutting the hide

The hide-cellar man must trim and salt the hide so that it will keep perfectly. Improper curing and shipping methods are responsible for additional losses in hides and leather.

Finally, the tanner must properly tan the hide in order to produce the best quality leather. He usually does so because he pays a high price for the hide in relation to the selling price of the leather.

There are a number of important points in the "know-how" of improving hides. The butcher - or the farmer who takes off hides - should provide himself with proper tools, especially suitable knives.

Skinning knives should have rounded blades without sharp points. They must be sharpened carefully and the edge kept sharp and straight by frequent sharpening. The knife should never be used with a short, choppy stroke but with a long, sweeping one. It is very important to make the opening cuts straight and in the proper place so that the hide will be as nearly square as possible, will lie flat in cure, and will cut to best advantage after it is tanned. Crooked, ragged edges waste leather.

The butcher must be careful not to cut the hide when using the knife in skinning. Cuts and scores damage leather. Corduroy cuts, although not deep, cannot be shaved off without loss of valuable leather. The butcher should not leave fat and meat on the hide, because these belong to the carcass.



Hides should never be left overnight without salt





It is poor  
economy to try  
to save salt



Fat, meat, tailbones, ears, gristle, and sinews should all be removed from the hide before salting. The hide under a mass of fat or meat does not get its share of salt promptly; and may spoil before the salt can penetrate to it.

At this stage the hide-cellar man, who salts the hides, can do his part to prevent spoilage. Serious damage in hide values and potential leather may result from poor or careless curing.


Clean, new salt should be used in curing - at least a pound of salt per pound of hide. Good hides are worth about thirty times as much per pound as salt. It is therefore poor economy to make a small saving on salt and risk a large loss from spoiled hides. Prompt salting is essential. Spoilage may start soon after the hide is taken off, but the hide must cool before it is salted. Hides should never be left overnight without salt. They should remain in the pack until thoroughly cured - about thirty days. Otherwise they may spoil during shipping.

Finally after proper curing, hides should be freed of surplus salt, folded and tied for shipment. They should be shipped in a clean, dry car or truck and care taken that they will not be damaged by nails or metal. They must not come in contact with dirt, especially iron rust or chemicals.

For more detailed instructions on grub control, skinning, curing, and handling of hides and skins, see your County Agent, Vocational Agricultural Instructor, or write the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for Farmers Bulletins Nos. 1055 and 1596.

Hides should be  
shipped in a  
clean car, or a  
truck free of  
protruding nails





***SAVE  
YOUR HIDES  
TO GET  
THE AXIS  
HIDES!***

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
EASTERN REGIONAL RESEARCH LABORATORY  
FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION  
EXTENSION SERVICE

